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## Governor Deval Patrick

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## GOVERNOR PATRICK DISCUSSES IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY TO FUTURE GROWTH AT PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION ADVOCACY DAY

Tuesday, March 5, 2013 – Governor Deval Patrick today addressed hundreds of students from Massachusetts community colleges, state universities and University of Massachusetts campuses at a rally to kick off Public Higher Education Advocacy Day at the State House. Students will spend their day seeking legislative support to increase state funding for financial aid programs. Governor Patrick's Fiscal Year (FY) 14 proposed budget creates opportunity for students and their families across the Commonwealth by making college more affordable and accessible.

"Putting a college education in reach of all of our students grows jobs and unlocks economic opportunity," said Governor Patrick. "Somewhere here today is the person who is going to cure cancer; or take us to Mars; or invent the next iPad. Somewhere here today is the nurse who is going to care for us; the craftsman who is going to rebuild the skyline of Boston; the musician who is going to draw thousands to Symphony Hall. I want that to happen here in Massachusetts. We have made great strides in higher education but there is more to do to make sure everyone can get to college, no matter their income."

The Governor's FY14 budget calls for renewed investment in education in order to create opportunity across the Commonwealth and to keep the Massachusetts economy growing. The proposed budget would provide universal access to high quality early education for children across the state, from birth through age five; fully fund K-12 education and allow for extended school days in high-need schools; make college more affordable and accessible for high school graduates; and allow community colleges to expand their efforts to provide students with the knowledge and skill training needed to succeed in the workplace.

The Administration will invest a total of \$6.79 billion in education in FY14, including over \$550 million in new targeted investments that will bring Chapter 70 funding to \$4.39 billion, the highest in state history. These investments also include \$152 million in FY14 to make college more affordable and accessible for students across the Commonwealth by:

- Significantly increasing funding to the MASSGrant program, which provides financial assistance for students demonstrating the greatest need;
- Expanding the Completion Incentive Grant Fund, which allows students enrolled at certain campuses to receive a maximum of \$8,000 over four years for credits earned towards their degree;
- Providing annual increases for the community college funding formula developed as part of the Governor's community college proposal, totaling \$20 million in FY14; and
- Furthering the Commonwealth's support for funding at least 50 percent of the educational costs at the University of Massachusetts.

In addition, the Governor's education plan includes:

- \$131 million investment in the early education and care system will provide funding to work to eliminate the Department of Early Education and Care's (EEC) current birth to age-five waitlist which is now at 30,000 children statewide; expand initiatives to ensure the highest educational quality among providers of early education and care; assist early educators and providers with attaining higher levels of proficiency, skill and quality; increase educational programs and supports for parents and family members to further engage them in their child's success; and expand efforts to provide comprehensive support services to children and their families.
- \$226 million in increased Chapter 70 local aid will hold every district harmless for aid; keep every district at foundation levels of spending; finish the Chapter 70 equity reforms of 2007; guarantee an increase of \$25 per pupil for every district; calculate Out of District Special Education at \$35,000 per year, an increase of \$25,000 per year in prior years to appropriately compensate districts for the costs of providing special education; and eliminate the cap of pre-kindergarteners included in enrollment for Chapter 70.
- \$5 million for a targeted expanded learning time initiative, allowing for middle school students in high-need schools to have the additional time and resources they need to build differentiated systems of learning, and ensuring that students have access to enrichment programs that will enhance their ability to succeed both in and out of the classroom. The proposal also includes an additional \$9 million in

funding for comprehensive supports to students and their families in Gateway Cities.

Today's Public Higher Education Advocacy event was organized by a broad coalition, including the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts and campus student groups to garner support for the Governor's increased higher education investment.

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